REMARKS

Claims 1-4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Namie et al. (US 2002/0142871) in view of Duffield et al (EP 0916869).

The invention of this application discloses and claims structure that is different from Namie et al. (US 20020142871) hereinafter Namie, in view of Duffield et al (EP 0916869), hereinafter Duffield. Further, Namie in view of Duffield does not provide any teaching, suggestion, or motivation that would allow one of ordinary skill in the art to arrive at the invention as claimed. Specifically, claim 1 recites a tensioner 21 comprised of an outer body 23 and an inner body 24. Claim 1 recites an outer body 23 provided with a tensioner mounting means, an inner body fitting hole 23a, and an inner body 24. Claim 1 has been amended to recite an inner body sealed to said outer body by heat welding.

Missing Structure : Inner Body Sealed to Outer Body

Further, Namie lacks an inner body heat sealed to an outer body. Namie uses a metal cylinder which is press-fit into a plastic outer body. There is no mention in Namie of heat welding. As such, it is respectfully suggested that heat welding of the inner body to the outer body is a claimed structural distinction which cannot be ignored. Heat welding results in a seal.

Press-fitting the inner body to the outer body does not result in sealed structure. Heat welding results in a material with no gap as two surfaces are sealed together. Press-fit results in an interface between two different surfaces with gaps there between. Friction between the two surfaces holds the device together. Over time the two surfaces experience increased gaps and leaks therebetween due to wear.

Missing Structure: Mounting Means

Claim 1 includes a tensioner mounting means. This limitation is a 35 U.S.C. §112, sixth paragraph, limitation and is in means plus statement of function format. See MPEP 2181 et seq. Applicant wishes to invoke this language as a 35 U.S.C. §112, sixth paragraph, limitation in means plus statement of function format.

Claim 1 has been amended and is now believed to be in a condition for allowance. Claims 2-4 are dependent on claim 1 and are also believed to be allowable. Reconsideration of claims 1-4 is respectfully requested.

Applicant wishes to thank the Primary Examiner for her consideration of this application.

The undersigned invites a telephone call from the Primary Examiner if it would expedite the processing and examination of the application.

Further, if there are any additional charges, or any overpayment, in connection herewith, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any such deficiency, or credit any such overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 23-3060. This response is believed to be timely, however, in the event that the Commissioner deems it to be untimely, then please consider this as a petition for extension of time with authorization to charge deposit account 23-3060 therefor.

Respectfully Submitted,

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